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**CUSTOMER SERVICE AND RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT**

**Thesis**

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## ABSTRACT

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<p>The objective of this thesis was to find out how a good customer service and relationship management could be essential to the customer satisfaction and the growth of the organisations. The study report analyses the benefits of a good customer service and the relationship management in achieving the customer satisfaction. The technique used to carry out the study was a qualitative research method where the interviews were used to find out the information from the six different organisations operating in a business to business perspective. The commissioner of this thesis was H&amp;A Team Oy. The aim of the report was to focus and to emphasize on how customer service and relationship management can be well implemented within the business organisations for the maximum and quality customer satisfaction.</p> <p>The theoretical framework of this thesis consists of the customer service management and relationship management with their brief definitions and the explanations. The different ways of customer service management and types of the customer relationship management have been highlighted in the report. The study covers how efficient service delivery can be enhanced and equivalent recommendations on what to focus on more to achieve equivalent satisfaction to the customers.</p> <p>The conclusion of the study found out that customers service and relationship management is equivalent to customer satisfaction and reputation of the organisations to its customers. Researches carried out highlighted that good services given to the customers result in customers being satisfied which in return builds and strengthens the relationship between the companies and the customers.</p>		
<b>Key words</b> Business to business marketing perspective, customer service, relationship management, service delivery, service providers.		

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

In the business industry satisfaction of the customers and their relationship with the business is the key factor that every service provider looks upon to deliver the best. There are different ways and means of achieving this. This thesis focuses on the customer service and the relationship management as far as customer care and satisfaction are concerned. The information obtained from the study was quite enthusiastic as the quality customer service starts from the small factors that one does to satisfy its customers.

The aim of this thesis is to emphasize how a good customer service can be implemented in the business organisations to give the best customer satisfaction and growth of the business. The objective of the this is to find out how customer service and the relationship management is essential to customer satisfaction and development of the organisations. The study has been carried out in six different companies that operate in the business to business perspective to find out how the topic of study goes with the business operations in the real market and the current changing business techniques in the market at large.

The theoretical part covered in chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis is basically on the customer service and the customer relationship management. The theoretical writing is for the key knowledge understanding and being conversant with the terms of study. It carries on in depth learning of the customer service and relationship management. The key definitions of terms and their relevance has been the main factor for these two chapters. The theoretical work was carried out with the aid of reliable sources, that is from books to the online materials that supported the two, customer service and relationship management.

The research study was carried out with the use of the qualitative research method. The study was carried out among the six companies whose main business operations are on the business to business perspective aspect. This thesis research study was majorly covered with the use of the interviews. Twenty questions basing on the topic were formulated which were used for the whole entire research part for the six companies used for the study. The research was carried out in different locations and times, the results obtained were then combined and compared together and their relevance to the topic has been given in chapter 5.

The commissioner of this thesis was H&A Team Oy. The company majorly operates in the business to business perspective. The company majorly operates in the Helsinki region and its surroundings to deliver the customer service to its clients on a daily basis of the business operations. The reason for having chosen the company is because of its enormous growth and expansion in the business sector. The company has been operating for the past fifteen years since its inception. It employs staff from different nationalities hence a reason that it gives it an advantage to have quite a different service combined from different staffs from different nationalities. Service delivery and customer satisfaction is a priority to consider, the customers come first.

## 2 CUSTOMER SERVICE MANAGEMENT

Customer service can be described as one of the factors of ensuring that the customers are satisfied with the product or the services offered by the concerned party. The customer service takes place in different perspectives during day to day transactions and the activities taken in a day. The customer service takes place in different ways for example ranging from in-person interaction, the phone calls between the customers and the service providers, the self-service systems or by any other means that lead to the customer satisfaction. The authors, Gary Armstrong and Philip Kotler explain well about the customer satisfaction in their writing that to achieve a reliable full customer service, customer satisfaction needs to be fully taken care of where it depends on the product's perceived performance in delivering value relative to the expectations of the buyers. If the performance of the product falls short of the customer's expectations, the buyer will be dissatisfied and if it matches the customer's expectations, the buyer is satisfied. When the performance exceeds the customer's expectations, the buyer will be delighted hence the customer gets fully satisfied and reliability from the party delivering the services. (Armstrong & Kotler 1999, 8.)

Efficient customer service delivery to the clients takes the full responsibility of the responsible personnel in delivering the quality of the services to the desired people in the market. To achieve this there is a need of the full commitment of the relevant given authorities within a given period, hence quality service delivery. Quality service delivery relies heavily on the employees of an organisation in response to the managerial needs. Having the employee and upper management responsibilities is not only enough as there is need for accountable customer satisfaction to ensure that employees provide exceptional customer service to every customer all the given time. A qualified well-trained frontline employee is the key to the customer satisfaction in the firm, well knowledgeable and engaged managers on the other point are the key to the well-trained employees responsible for delivering the services to the customers at a given specified period. Evenson in his book elaborates that by effective training, observing, and motivating, the employees learn to do their best and this results to the level of customer service that both the company and the customers expect. (Evenson 2011, 15.)

Managing the customers service requires soft skills, in this case the soft skills encompasses listening, empathy, interpersonal communication, team building, group dynamics, sensitivity

to others, compassion, integrity and honesty. The companies use the soft skills in foreground technique as critical to business success and have continued to show prominence achievement in the global economy. Kamin in his book explains that how the companies define the skills exceeds previous definitions, and the testimony to the importance of soft skills have garnered. The types of skills that the companies are looking at now reflect the changing nature of the society and the business. These are mostly related to personal growth and have emerged to be essential to business and community organisations, hence they have changed to be more than just reading and writing. (Kamin 2013, 10.)

A great customer service and support leads to happy customers, without human capital to supply the responsive support, customers would have no incentive to stay hence a reason to move to the competitors. A human capital and empowerment of the employees is the key role to delivering a satisfiable work to the customers. The customers happiness is the business driver it gives the business a feedback on how the services offered whether satisfiable or not. The customer service virtuous cycle below elaborates on how customer satisfaction and loyalty can be achieved. (Burroughs 2015, 1.)



FIGURE 1. Customer service virtuous cycle (Adapted from Randy Burroughs 2015, 1.)



## 2.1 Service breakdown

Based on the customer sub-division, the customer service is an important part of maintaining the ongoing client relationships that are majorly the key to continue the revenue returns to the service providers. As for the customer satisfaction breakdown, many of the service firms have worked hard to develop and ensure that the customer satisfaction and their needs are increased and fulfilled at a given period. Even though the service companies have many of the operating personnel working behind the scenes, it is clear that a few personnel interact with the customers that normally leads to the formation of the customer's perception and own view of the company in the operating environment and the field of the service delivery. To achieve the service breakdown in the field of personnel service delivery, Sisson & Storey (2000) in their book explain that all organisations comprise unique bundle of assets and their access to such resources and ability to make effective use of them provides an essential source of the firm's competitive advantage (Barney1991; Grant 1991).

Service breakdown focuses on the value that the customer has to an organisation. The customer's value can be created, destroyed, and can be ignored at any customer management stage, while most of the values are created by the organisations that compound value creation at each CM stage by using and building on the gains created by the company. Maximum value of the model occurs when all the elements are managed together rather than independent parts. Joined-up management creates maximum value. Good proposition helps to shape the organisation and align the people, processes, and the technological infrastructure. Good measurement improves the customer management activities. (Woodcock, Stone & Foss 2003, 43)

In service delivery to the customers, at times not all the customers can be satisfied at a certain standard level. In business sector, there are uncertainties that could happen in line with the operation of the business. When such situations happen, it could lead to the consequences of the clients to even cancelling the contracts. To resolve this on time before it gets too far, one must empower the employees to make instant decisions when the customers complain or when the situation that could escalate. One has to make an effort to fix the problems rather than telling the customers problems will be fixed. The figure below on handling the customers complaints elaborates on how the service breakdown could be resolved on time.

## Complaints are Opportunities to...

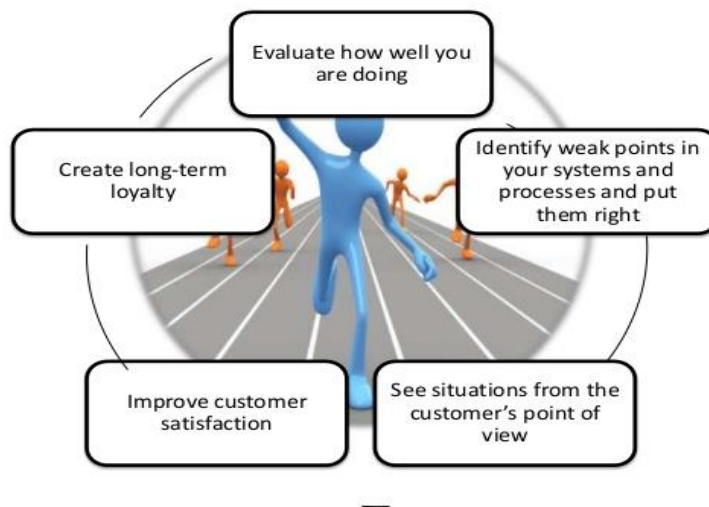


FIGURE 2. Complaint handling. (Adapted from slideshare.net/neel9punedost/complaint-handling 2013.)

### 2.2 Excellence and success

For any business to enhance and achieve excellent customer service, some of the customer service quality should be observed by both parties. Such factors could be performed through the provision of outstanding customer service. Developing good customer service interaction with the customers can mean a big difference between the retaining or the losing of the customers in the business within a given period, hence the need to nurture and develop good customer service relationship with the customers. Involvement and participation of each of the parties can determine the achievement and the success to the firm. It as well results to the full satisfaction of the customers. Through the direct participation of the members, the business performance can be improved. (Marchington & Wilkinson 2000.)

The customer excellence and success rely heavily on how the customers are treated and served with the kind of services they expect from the service personnel in any service firm and organisation. The major key to high and quality customer satisfaction is by adjusting to the customer's style and expectation. During the customer satisfaction process, the author Mitchell Dave explains in his book that there are some factors that should be applied to get desired feedback and the results. The highlighted factors here are that, behaviour breeds behaviour,

this is applicable in such a way that when the customers are treated in a satisfactory manner, the positive result will be clearly noticed on how the customers would be responding from the service reaction. Positive behaviour overcomes the negative behaviour, this is in the case that, if the service personnel at a front desk treat and serve a customer in a happy mood and to the customers desire, then if the customer had a bad impression or a negative thinking about the company, when the person is satisfied, the person will have a different information to give after the service delivery, hence good behaviour can change the customer's mind way of thinking and salvage the company or even an organisation from the capsizing bad information from the customers. Romantics are the most loyal of consumers, recognising them and showing appreciation to all the customers can work very powerful and enable the company to go a step ahead of its competitors. Customers need to be provided with the accurate information and all what is said should be an implied promise as the expectations should be met on time. The expert type of customers values what they know to be true, more service delivery builds customer's credibility. In achieving the customer satisfaction, there is need of consistency in the service delivery, making a small mistake or falling short can change the minds of customers and tarnish the name of the organisation completely. Listening to the customers 'point of view at some point is very important as they can express all their ideas and suggestions. Customers need attention, by listening and serving them consistently can enhance them reduce any chances of any mistake that may arise. Finally, in service delivery field, one must apologize, solve and be thankful to the customers if the maximum satisfaction to the customers is to be met, when a mistake or an error occurs, customers should be apologized, and explanation of the situation given to them. The problem that may arise from the customer's side should be solved and fixed in the exact way the customer wants. Thank the person after the delivery of service, the person will know that they are being taken care of, hence this will result to a good reputation about the company. (Dave 2013, 172-178.)

To achieve an excellent and a successful customer service to all the clients to one's business, one must observe the key policies that drives up the business. Evaluation of the whole process must be highlighted before the initial operation starts. Figure 3 below has been used to explain how excellence and success in service delivery can be enhanced.

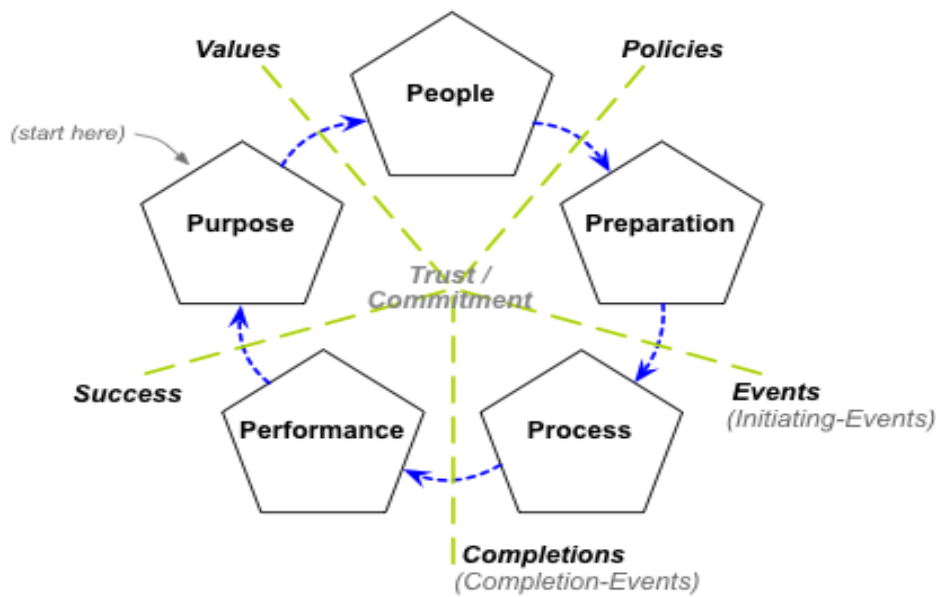


FIGURE 2. Customer enterprise architecture. (Adapted from Tom Graves 2016.)

### 2.3 Benefits to the business firms

The customer service in a firm or in any organisation plays an important role in facilitating the success of the business. The customer sales representatives handle different issues of the organisation, some of such instances and factors range from one to another, some of them are, solving of the issues over the mails and the making of the phone calls and even through the skype for business. Enabling and developing good customer service in an organisation is one of the most important factors to be taken into consideration, in any firm or an organisation. This is because the customer service section handles the customers' issues for example questions asked by the customers and making of the different payments at the counters. To deliver such quality and efficient services, there should be a good relationship between the working personnel and the human resource management in the organisation. (Storey 1992, 35.) Customer satisfaction is achieved by following a step-by-step process, as there is always a distinct relationship among quality, customer service and customer satisfaction. Considering the service and quality, what the customer says needs to be served not what the service provider desires to but keen, obeys and respects the customers decision and choice of the service desired. Satisfaction to the customer is the perception of the expected services have been provided and met. Providing quality customer service is automatically followed by satisfaction to the

customer, whereby it results to the satisfied customers to even bringing in more customers through recommendations and good reputations. The service system must be put in place to measure customer satisfaction. In developing the service system within an organisation, one must follow and plan at each point of the system implementation. There is need of total commitment and should begin from the top, that is the CEO or the highest rank position in the organisation. One has to know the customers well and develops standards of service quality performance, customers 'matters should be handled as soon as possible to enhance the service quality. Customer service systems must be motivated by hiring, training, and compensating the staff, rewarding service quality accomplishments, staying close to the customers, and finally working towards continuous improvement of the whole system. (Richard 1993, 12-18.)

## **2.4 Meeting the customer expectations**

When it comes to the matters concerning the customers, all their expectations from the customer service point should be satisfactory at any given point, since the customers' personnel have the mandate to solve the problems and to meet their needs at the point of service. Portraying a good picture to the customers through the problem solution is a turning point to the organisation or the concerned firm. As per the case, when a customer faces or has problems, what they do expect is the fastest and quick resolution and a well elaborated engagement process. In provision and meeting the customers' requirements and providing a long-lasting solution, the customer agents need to have the real-time metrics and a real-time collaboration mechanism which is not only available through the traditional means but can be met as well through other fields and techniques, this way allows essence to the customer service delivery leading to the maximum customer satisfaction. For the customer expectations to be met, there should as well be a collective and individual management within the organisation concerned with the service delivery. (Llyod & Newell 1998.)

Customer expectations and their satisfaction is the key enhancement to the customer service delivery. Meeting the customer expectation, one needs know what the customers really need at a given time. There is a need to knowing the targets well to execute the services fully and meet their needs, one can be able to explain problems that may be unique to the customers. Asking enough questions of customers and co-workers is worth it as it will reduce the stress in meeting the customer needs. Work would be much easier once people, including those in the

organization and in the personal life, articulate specifically what they expect and what would satisfy them. (Scott 2000, 52.)

Figure 2 below illustrates how expectations of the customers can be met and achieved in each time. Customers' expectations can be easily achieved by covering more solutions to the problems they have. The employees who deal with the customer on the frontline should have alternatives when customers demand and asks for something that cannot be met at the current time. Transparency must be considered in delivering services to the customers, trust with the customers can be met when the companies delivering services to the customers have tangible values and policies that govern their service delivery to the customers. Giving clear timelines on what is happening is one way of building trust instead of keeping the customers waiting for long periods without explanation. This way the customers get tired and might to interest being lost and expectations not being made. For maximum customer expectation to be made, one must be realistic and optimistic that a certain problem will be fixed in a moment, or further instructions and explanations should be given to make the customers aware of what is going to be the outcome.



FIGURE 3. How to manage customer expectations (Adapted from Michele McGovern 2017.)

### **3 CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM)**

Customer relationship management can be explained as the practises and methods that are used to maintain and enhance the customer's interaction by the companies and organisations. It is basically used to analyse the relationship between the customers and the service providers and as well as the data throughout the customer's life cycle, with the main objective of developing and improving the business relationships with the customers, improving customer retention, and as well driving the sales growth to achieve the best in the competitive markets. By observing such terms and the requirements, the system enables the companies and organisations using this model of customer relationship to retain most of their customers and even to expand their marketing and sales territories through the customer's reputation from the experience. For the enhanced good customer relationship to be realised, strategic approach that emphasizes the disciplines of planning as compared to the properties of a model as considering the organization's own unique human resources. (Becker & Huselid 1998, 85.)

The system of managing the customer relationships is normally designed in such a way that the information from the customers are compiled in different ways, such as using the company's website, use of the social media, materials used in the marketing, the direct mail system usage and as well use of the phone calls between the customers and the service providers. A good customer relationship helps to retain the customers, in this case managing the customers means managing the demand. Losing a customer means losing a single sale hence losing the entire stream of purchases that the customer would make over a lifetime of patronage. (Armstrong & Kotler 1999, 15.)

Management of customers within a business relationship perspective lies on several elements that the company in question desires to uphold for them to enhance a good relationship with their esteemed customers. Retention of customers is the key to maintaining a health customer relationship. In a situation where the business is not able to gain any new customers, it could be challenging for most of the businesses, but considering the need to highly maintain the current customers, the proportionality of the success of an organisation would be the same as at the current situation of the business. Customer retention enhances the relationship between the relevant parties within the business or any organisation sector, hence a factor to consider in building the customer relationship. Developing customer potentials goes hand in hand with

customer relationship development as an infrequent customer can be turned into a casual higher spending and frequent referring advocate. The other factor to consider in relationship management is the de-selection of customers, it is of the great benefit to the organisation when it puts more efforts into the existing customers with the greatest potential. Customer lifetime is one of the biggest revenues the customer can spend with the business or a given organisation directly or through the referral recommendations over a nominal period which could be up-to a period of ten years. The more frequently the customer buys from a certain firm, the more the loyalty and relationship develops and builds. (Roberts 2001, 4.)

Customer relationship management as elaborated by the figure below is the key enterprise application module that manages the company's interactions with the current and the future customer through organization and the coordination, sales and marketing, provision of better customer services in beside with the technical support. A key strategy to acquiring, retaining, and collaborating with selective customer to create superior value for the company and the customer. A key factor to service customer support, retention, and loyalty.



FIGURE 4. Management Information, Customer relationship management (Adapted from [tutorialspoint.com/management\\_information\\_system/customer\\_relationship\\_management.htm](http://tutorialspoint.com/management_information_system/customer_relationship_management.htm) 2018.)



### **3.1 Types of Customer Relationship Management**

The customer relationship management has different and varied types that leads to satisfaction of its customers basing on the applicable type at a given time. In enhancing the relationship between the business partners, one must keenly observe the type used in the extermination of the services to their customers. Understanding the different distinctive types of the customer relationship management is a benefit to the customers and the service providers. It enhances on the maximization of the customer lifetime, which enables an organization to recognize that not all customers are equally profitable and that it must devise strategies to enhance the profitability of those customers it seeks to target. The loyal customers are intangible asset that adds value to the balance sheet as they represent the goodwill earned by the brand, hence, a good reason for understanding the classification of the CRM types in the chain management in rendering the services to the clients. (Payne 2005, 9.)

A clear understanding of the CRM is required for one to assess its proper application. Knowing the CRM as a business strategy that helps in maximizing profitability, revenue, and customer satisfaction by organizing around customer segments, fostering behaviour that satisfies customers and implementing customer-centric processes is a key factor that enables to render services fully to the customers. It is both a business approach to improved management of customer operations and a collection of technologies to assist in automating the operations delivered to the customers. (Bligh & Turk 2004, 7.)

#### **3.1.1 Analytical and collaborative**

Analytical customer relationship management is designed to analyse deeply the customer's information and data and disclose essential intension of behaviour of the customers on which capitalization can be done by the organization. A need to find new sources of revenue is one of the fundamental requirement for business growth in every given aspect of business. In this perspective it enhances on reaching to the current customers and prospects in ways that will encourage them to do more business with the organisation. Analytically, from the customer's perspective, there are certain choices in products services, delivery, and packaging that the effort of an organisation to sell more products may result in onslaught of the information, which may lead to a confusing information. As far as the business perspective is concerned, there are

several points as well to consider, where the information is exchanged between the business and the prospective and current customers, the customer support centres, direct mail, telesales, direct sales, e-commerce, and the business website pages accessed by the customers, hence might be challenging factors to figure out which methods deliver the best results. (Teklitz & McCarthy 2001, 277.)

The acquisition of customers is at the fore of any organisation in designing the CRM campaigns. Through the current years, the customer acquisition techniques have evolved over time spurred by technological advancements and customer heterogeneity. Basing on data improvements collection capabilities. Storage data capabilities, ability to analyse the collected data, and customer profiles, hence the factors have paved the way to increasing the intricate and focused acquisition techniques. In attaining competitive acquisition technique, there is a need for organisation to implement mass-level strategies to foster the market organisational development. (Kumar & Petersen 2012, 13-14.)

The collaborative CRM deals with the integration of the customer interaction and the communication channels for example through the phone, email, website, and faxes. Main agenda of this part is to refer the customers in systematic and consistent manner. Primarily it maximizes profitability, revenue, and customer satisfaction. Certain technologies support the business organisations, for example gaining customer attention, storage and analysis of customer satisfaction, and internal process information. The critical and important part of the type of the CRM above, is the combination of software installation with the customer-oriented strategies. Basing on technology, it is one of the powerful tool to support the CRM initiatives and with no alliance, the tool of less benefit to the organisation business or to the company. The type of CRM particularly supports the processes performed at the office level, that affects the activities of the customer and enhancement of the customer relationship. The CRM type addresses on the maintenance, planning, marketing, advertising, finance, billing, invoicing, and information technology. Enhances on various departments in the business to share useful information which serves to improve quality of customer service delivered to the clients. Implementation can be done through basic software or in more complex installation depending on the requirements of a company. The customer relationships, customer experience, and customer value highlighted by the CRM type shows how the current business situation undergoes vast cultural shift transforming from the mass marketing to the product-siloed thinking of the industrial age to the customer-based culture of the information age, analysing

primary goal to build relationships with individual customers who become more valuable to the enterprise. Current market situation has enhanced the organisations to being customer centric without being controversial where the employees are perceived to matter in comparison to the customers, since with no engaged employees, the enterprise might face a hard time in delivering the services to the customers and the desired consumers of the products. (Peppers & Rogers 2010, 37-40.)

Competitive market situation in the current business development opportunities forces the companies to come up with new marketing techniques that can enable them to survive through the competitive marketing storms. Due to the highlighted above factors, it forces the business organisations to develop innovative marketing activities to capture the customer needs and improve customer satisfaction and retention for long term benefits for both parties, hence improving marketing decision support. Organisation managers are faced with rapidly changing competitive marketing environment., hence being forced to become more competitive through better and critical decision making. Hence the managers need to implement the collaborative CRM in their take in the business organisations managed. Angela Hausman elaborates better in the journal writing of Doing business in a Digital World. (Hausman 2005, 226.)

### **3.1.2 Operational and geographic**

Operational CRM type focuses on improvement, automation, and enhancement of business processes based on customer support. The part of the CRM majorly focuses on the customer attraction, customer analyzation and customer satisfaction. The section majorly caters on basis that leads to customer care taking and provision of customer support. It is one of the tools that helps solve organisational problems. Operational CRM works in a customer and organisational convenient benefits that helps to save time and resources. The customers can easily access what type of services they may require on the business website without necessarily having to make the phone calls to the organisation to make enquiries. The Operation focuses on the framework and objectives established for the operational businesses processes and initiatives. Information and analyses obtained must be directed at changing and managing business processes towards strategic objectives that can enhance the organisation achievements. (Laursen & Thorlund 2010, 4-7.)

The geographic CRM combines the geographic information system and the traditional CRM. The data is analysed to provide the snapshot of potential customers in a region or to plan routes for customer visitors. Bases on the geographic and the traditional systems and focuses on the geographical data being analysed to provide the snapshot of the potential customers in each region and in the planning of the routes for the visits by the customers. The part covers on the front office operation, relationships concerning business, analysis and as well as back office operations. Majorly checks on the planning, marketing, and billing information. A need of interaction with other companies and partners as well. The key players in the relationship are suppliers, vendors, distributors, and industrial works. Data analyses checks on the Target-marketing campaign, business strategies, success of business strategies. The Geographical CRM operates on the coverage of the information systems of the information and its centralized centre of the information. There is a need for the organisations to carry out integration process of the type and its implementations. It enhances on the collaborative models among the firms not necessarily operating in the same supply chain. The development of the above type evolves and grows with time with the necessity of its integration. (Mangal & Karmarkar 2006, 39-46.)

The CRM enhances on the development of the interactive customer relationships to strategize marketing of an organisation basing on locations, where the consumer is perceived to be either proactive or reactive in relation to the marketing communications, the differential part is on the approach taken by the customers within the interactive media in contrast to a passive between the ears effect. Customer reaction could be for example, the consumer being exposed to brand-sponsored communications and actively discussing on the social media blog posts publishing and making searches relating to the communications. A proactive consumer bases on the consumer initiating the cycle without being exposed to any communications sponsored by the brand for example through reaction to the blog post not sponsored by the marketer or to positive or to negative feedback related to the brand product from a consumer colleague. (Ståhlberg & Mailla 2013, 5-6).

### **3.1.3 Sales Intelligence**

Many organisations face a challenge of identifying their esteemed customers, that use their products and the services. Empowering the sellers with better information about the prospect companies, markets and individuals, the firms shall be able to maximize their chances of hitting

their target and to create efficiencies within the sales operational environment. The sales intelligence CRM part bases on data science to improve the sales efforts within the organisation. Sales intelligence CRM enhances on the customer development progresses and adhere to the customer needs and requests at a given period, to maintain the relationship management between customers and the organisations in question. Analyses on sales concerns by the customers. (Glass & Callahan 2014, 16-19.)

Sales Intelligence focuses as well on the intelligence of the business, bases on the practical point where information examining is worth to use on how value is created within an organization. Different perspective of information intelligence counts when it comes the CRM type mentioned above, which enhances on the sales aspects of an organisation towards achieving and meeting the customer satisfaction. There are different information perspectives values that is a concern to the sales intelligence CRM, functional, cross-functional, and enterprise perspective. The earlier bases on the tasks relating to business functions for example, sales, marketing, and finance. The transactions and operational applications executing data for specific tasks on a set period, Once the transactions are completed, the data associated can be archived for future references. The cross-functional perspective analyses on the complex information technology applications, the enterprise resource planning systems, that oversees end-to-end processing of a sequence of operations. The data in this part is only not used to run the business it is as well used to monitor how well the business is run. The enterprise perspective focuses on how the organization can change and improve how to improve the way things are done. Through reviewing of the key performance indicators, the managers can seek to understand where bottles and the challenges and to determine approaches to alleviate their root causes. At this point, the data may not only be used to run the business, the data is used to improve the business. (Loshin 2012, 15-19.)

The figure below highlights the combination of the above-mentioned types of the customer relationships management. The CRM specifically helps a business organisation to run effectively and to manage the current changing trends in the business technological advancement.

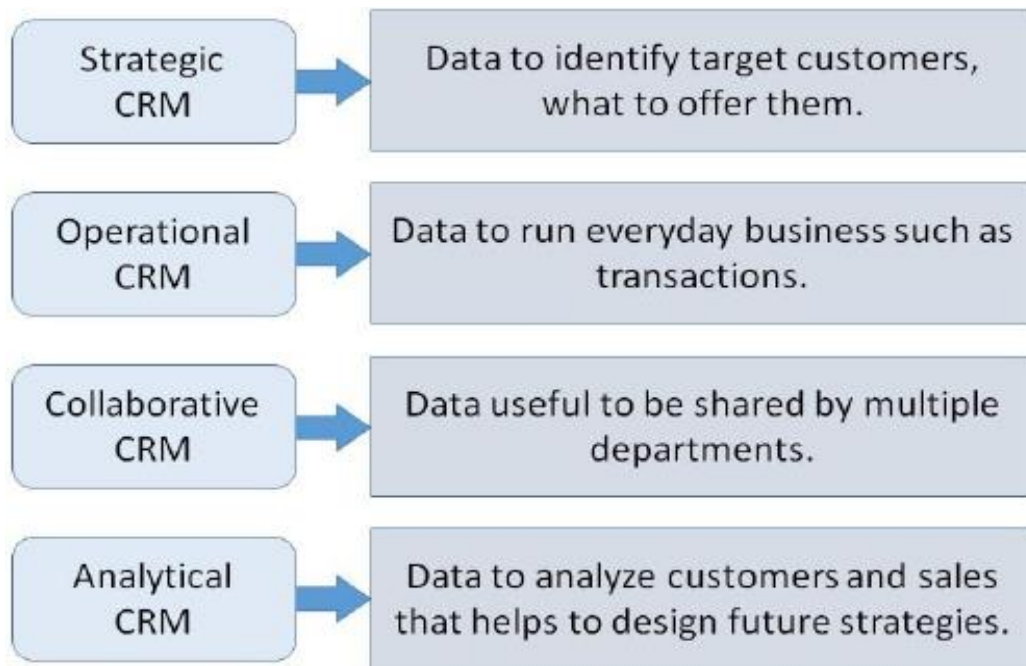


FIGURE 6. Types of CRM (Adapted from [tutorialpoint.com/customer\\_relationship\\_management/crm\\_quick\\_guide.htm](http://tutorialpoint.com/customer_relationship_management/crm_quick_guide.htm) 2018.)

### 3.2 Management software

CRM as a software of its own is basically the software that takes the information of a customers and stores the information in the single CRM database so as the business users can be able to retrieve it easily and can manage it. In maintaining the customer relationships, the software can as well be used to record various customer interactions carried out through the phone calls, social media, mail writing and other different channels basing on the system used. There should be first the establishment of the strengths and weaknesses in determining the current customer-based relationships since the sources of information majorly in this case are the customers and the employees. Improvement on the usage of the software lies largely on the leadership involvement and as well as the communications, training and development, performance management and pay and conditions within the given firm or an organisation. (Collins, 1991.)

Management software in customer relationship perspective streamlines all the aspects of the business management for the thousands of health and wellness businesses around the globe for the efficient serving of the customers. When the teams within the business line have the

deadlines to beat, resources and the deliveries to make, then they should have a reliable and dedicated project management software to run and operate efficiently without delays. It is hard for the organisations to succeed at the present and changing future time without the mastering of the customer relationship management strategy fundamentals. For the organisations to win in the decades ahead, one must understand and capitalize on the rapidly growing evolving social computing, mobility and customer analytics technologies as explained by William and authors in the paragraph. Technological advancement has completely changed the nature of social interaction, new rules requires the companies to use new thinking and apply new technologies to engage with the customers, keep in contact and build relationship that matter. The author, Gordon in his writing shows how companies can create innovative strategies and integrate technology, people, and process to interact and collaborate with customers and to achieve improved business results. Mastering of the relationships is of more higher value than any other factor within the organisation. The relationships suggest the direction in which a company's value will trend. Depreciation of the relationships in value, the future of the company will depreciate as well, hence a growing relationship enhances the growth value of the company as well. The earlier management principles were majorly concerned with listening to and conversing with existing customers, and developing, sustaining, and growing the value of relationship with them. (Gordon 2013, 2-3.)

### **3.3 CRM as a sales strategy**

Customer relationship management can be used as a mode of selling within the field of marketing by any concerned organisation that is ready to use this mode of system as it is the most efficient and the cost saving ways of marketing one's own business techniques and the ideas basing on what the company specifically deals on with. Without the CRM system model, it could be cumbersome for the concerned parties and the service providers as it could result in a lot of work and duties performed by the sales personnel hence the essence of embracing the idea is one of the best move by every organisation or a business company. The active sales team normally generates a lot of data and therefore how the information is gathered, being managed, and taken control of and as well the final information usage are the key determiners of whether the participants win or lose at the end of the business. As a sales strategy, there is need of marketization which involves outsourcing of activities previously performed inside the organization. Several sectors are involved in the strategy for example, externalization which is

associated with people's minds with the exposure of managerial decision-making in the sales to achieve the target. (Colling & Ferner 1995.)

Concerning the salesforce team, the use of the CRM system enhances the identity and the addition of the new leads easily and in a faster way to categorise them easily. The sales team can move on to the next tasks in a short time lapse if the CRM system is used as the time take for responses is cut short by the system hence making the workload to be reduced and solved within the shortest time possible. CRM system is one of the best key feature to maintain good customer relationship in one's own business, for example it helps one to understand the customers better and therefore the selling opportunities become clear and always straight to the point with less time wastage. CRM system process usage enhances the communication process in handling the customers, whereby communication is taken in two terms, top-down and bottom-up are basically used for analysis and exposition and consultation for the satisfactory understanding of both the parties involved. (Sisson & Storey 2000, 95.)

For a successful customer relationships management to be successful in an organisation, several factors must be taken into consideration. The illustration below shows the ingredients that work together in combination to give a successful CRM system. For a successful and well-established CRM, all the factors mentioned below must work together in correlation to one another, all are dependable to each other at a given point.



FIGURE 5. Ingredients of CRM(Adapted from [tutorialspoint.com/customer\\_relationship\\_management/crm\\_quick\\_guide.htm](https://tutorialspoint.com/customer_relationship_management/crm_quick_guide.htm) 2018.)



## **4 H & A TEAM OY**

The company operates on a business to business perspective in the business industry. The customers enjoy a consistent, quality, and attentive services. The company has a well-trained and attentive staff in the cleaning industry working accordingly to the carefully service process and the schedule of the customer. The customers are the key priorities to the company at large and its staff training is the factor to counter for a positive and productive impact to the customers. (H & A Team Oy 2018.)

The first impression is based on customer satisfaction and service delivery is the key factor to meeting customer needs and requirements. A well-maintained cleaning brings business benefits with clear economic benefits. A high-quality service delivery and satisfaction to the customers and healthy quality cleaning improves the healthiness of working environment and safety to rendering quality service solutions to the customers. (H & A Team Oy 2018.)

### **4.1 Historical background**

The study on the case company began by first finding out on how and when the company was founded. Whereby the company was started in the year 2002, which is 15 years ago to the present time. It was first established by the present CEO of the company and later joined by his partner to operate the company together. Generally, at the beginning they were the ones performing all the duties as they did not have any employees as the company was still small at the time. Later being in the service industry for some time, the CEOs daughter later joined in the company to help run the company together. Where she later became the coordinator director. Little by little they started hiring in the employees as the business expanded with time and the need for more personnel increased. (H & A Team Oy 2018.)

Currently, the company has more than 100 employees in total and more than 140 contracted customers currently. The company since its inception has been operating in the Helsinki region and all the municipalities nearby. The company operates as business to business majorly and at time business to customers at some point. The company basically offers cleaning services both in the private, business and the public sectors. The company has been operating on a

competitive customer-oriented service chain to deliver the services to the customers. The important asset to the company is the employees who are committed and dedicated to work to their best for the benefit of customer satisfaction. (H & A Team Oy 2018.)

## **4.2 The core values**

The Core values of the company are that; customer orientation, reliability, quality, and staffing. The core values bring up several benefits with them, first impression, efficiency of operation, service design solution. Economic benefits are as well realised, some of the factors realised are, working environment safety, staffs comfort, customer enjoyment, image of the organization. The latest technologies are used as part of the service delivery and the environment is considered as the natural part of the business environment. The company makes sure that there is a consistent quality assurance to the customers all the time of the business operation. (H&A Team Oy 2018.)

## **4.3 Awards and success factors**

The Finnish Clean-Up Federation (SSTL) awarded the Clean Card quality certificate to the company, on the 31st of August 2010, the fourth (4.) clean-up company in Finland. "The Clean Card Certification is a certification of the quality assurance of a clean-up service. The Finnish Cleaning Engineering Association grants a certificate to a purification service organization meeting the Clean Card evaluation criteria based on the audit. The certificate is valid for three years and is monitored every six months "(SSTL). The company hereby in study qualified for the award of the certificate which shows their commitment to customer service. The awards have been part of the motivation to the company's business in quality assurance. It is constantly committed to developing the business, and quality aspects considered. Certification of pure services is one of the testimonies to the quality and the compliance with the criteria required. H & A Team Oy 2018.)

The needs of the pure services subscribers have been considered during the designing of the clean card criterion. The Finnish cleansing industry association has convened a subscriber forum to enhance that clean card meets the needs of the subscribers. All the awards won have

been due to the effortless work and commitment to serve the customer and to enhance their satisfaction and needs achievement. (H & A Team oy 2018.)

The presence of the field supervisors is as well another factor that gives them the strength to build the relationship well with the customers. They get to know the customers well and build a confidence in between them. The placement of the supervisors brings the customers closer and bridges the niche between the customers and the company. Flexibility is what matters as well and to fix everything on request especially when it comes to urgent customer needs. They have people in the field who are standby in case of customer call to help them with work during the day. At other times, there are always some people who are available to the customers should anything come-up from the customers, hence a need to fix them on time. This as well keeps them go strong in-service delivery. (H & A Team Oy 2018.)

The leadership practices and teamwork have been successfully implemented in the fieldwork on daily basis of business operations for more than ten years of service to the customers. The quality as per the company is to enhance that the customers get the service they need as agreed and within the agreed timetable. The customers can be easily reached within the twenty-four hours a day in case of any help required at any given time. The major key to the quality service is the committed and a skilled staff to serve with pure professionalism. (H & A Team Oy 2018.)

#### **4.4 Services for business and environmental preservation**

The company creates a pleasant and a clean environment to work in. High quality cleaning services keeps the cleanliness at high level hence advancing the comfort of the customers and the staff. The customer is motivated and committed to the services by the staff whose professional competence and well-being are systematically cared for. The permanent quality rating has been satisfied. The services offered virtually cover all the types of real estate offices, museums, and swimming pools. The services are usually customized to suit the clients through the assurance that the customers receive the packages of the services they need. (H & A Team Oy 2018).

The company offers all types of cleaning, that is great cleaning and the final cleaning for all types of real estates. The specialty services offered include window cleaning, furniture wiping,

escalators cleaning, waxing and the general floor cleaning. The company is working to achieving customer satisfaction all the time and to minimise the complaints and dissatisfaction by the customer at any given period of service delivery to the clients. (H & A Team Oy 2018.)

Environmental care is the most important aspect driving the business operations within the company. The company has been trying to reduce the environmental burden and to actively develop the business in an environmentally friendly direction. Major aspects of environmental program are to guide procurement in a friendlier way, to improve coordination and commute travel, enhancing environmental friendly customer communication and staff awareness increase of environmental friendly. Such factors are taken into consideration through the usage of eco-labelled detergents, working together with the customers to find environmental friendly solutions for the real estate maintenance and cleaning. Staff training regularly, annual report on the environmental impacts on the business operations and detergent saving innovations and methods. (H & A Team Oy 2018.)

The company is committed to developing business through environmental considerations and to comply with encompass criteria on environmental preservation and safety. Environmental principals are based on the sustainable development and wide-ranging environmental impact in all the activities. Use of substances, tools, machines, and methods that work in the workplace to minimize the burden on the environment. Methods that save water and nature. Reduction of emissions due to commute travel and by effective route planning and vehicle tracking. (H & A Team Oy 2018.)

## **5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY-STUDY**

The start of the study, the agenda of the writer of the report was to find out how the CRM is used by the business organisations and how is it implemented into the enactment of the business on the daily aspects of their operations in concern to the customers. The study is performed through structured and unstructured questions where the earlier highlight on certain order of questions posted and the later tend to focus on general questions without necessarily following an order and hierarchy of questions. The study finds out implications of the topic of study and based on the answers obtained from the interviews conducted through face to face communications, audio phone calls and video phone calls to gather the necessary required information for the study to come true. The author of the thesis has used the qualitative research technique to interview the companies where information was derived from and placed together basing on the opinions obtained and avoiding repetition as some answers obtained would have clashed with one another. The directive of usage of the method mentioned was basically to get the direct information from the person on whom the questions has been channelled directly to without prior inclusion of the group of people. Agenda is the key to obtain first-hand information from the relevant person in-charge. Task research study was used to survey among the six companies that majorly operate in the field of B2B business aspect in their operation. Posted questions varied from one organisation to another basing on how the company operates their business and customer satisfaction. Interviewed questions have been highlighted by answering them in the preceding sub-chapters of this thesis by the author. Inclusion of interviewees ranged from managers of the organisation to the other employees in the lower rank.

The main commissioner chosen for the study in this case was H & A Palvelut Oy where the majority of studies has been conducted at. The other five companies are the companies that work as well with the field of Business-to-Business aspect relationship. The companies highlighted on interview-based study has been classified into six different interviews, that is from interview 1 to interview 6. The results obtained from the interviews have been stipulated in the sub-chapters 5.6.1 to 5.6.6.

## **5.1 Qualitative Research Technique**

Qualitative research technique is a form of inquiry that is applied in many academic disciplines such as social sciences and other scientific disciplines to seek information about a case study carried out. The information about the research is not known or revealed until all the research process has been fully carried out. Qualitative research involves data generation and analysis, it includes continuous data gathering and analysis as well as data mining, synthesis and re-analysis of data drawn from different sources. (Ereaut, Imms & Callingham 2002.)

Qualitative research technique, is primarily an exploratory research technique used to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations. A research technique that provides insights into the problem or helps to develop ideas or hypotheses to develop potential quantitative research. A research method used to uncover trends in thought and opinions and dive deeper into the problem. Data collection methods by the mentioned research technique vary using unstructured or semi-structured techniques. Common methods include focus groups discussions, individual interviews, and participation and as well observations. An umbrella term for wide variety of approaches to and methods of study of natural social life. Data collected is primarily nonquantitative in character, consisting of textual materials such as interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and documents and visual materials; artefacts, photographs, videos recordings, and internet sites that documents human experience about others and self in social action and reflexive states. (Saldana, Leavy & Beretvas 2014, 3-4.)

## **5.2 Reason for use of qualitative research technique**

Before taking into consideration any research method in any given field of study, it is always good to understand the major reason for choosing a method to conduct the survey. There are several implications that comes with knowing the research technique one is going to use to carry out the survey in the whole process of the study. One needs to have the knowledge of basic statistics, developing and evaluating measures of human thought and behaviour and conducting and interpretation of high quality research. Results obtained from the research study, one must be sensitive and mindful on moral principles and ethical reasoning, as a researcher, one must be morally responsible. Justification of the research and consequences

must be considered before commencing the survey of the studies. (Weathington, Cunningham & Pittenger 2012, 24-26.)

Thus, on the topic of study, the author uses the qualitative research technique due to the chance and opportunity to engage face to face with the interviewees. It is as well the best way to obtain the data as the non-verbal communications can be noted from the company's personnel staff hence can be used as part of the feedback information from the respondent. The mode of the research type enables the researcher to advance and reach more beyond the initial given responses and the data collected in general. The research has been conducted by means of direct observation of a sample, case studies, personal experiences, introspection, examination of relevant texts, focus groups and the researcher's own participation in the setting the person is taking. Qualitative research is pragmatic, interpretive, and grounded in the lived experiences of the people, the research is a broad approach to the study of social phenomena. (Hogan, Dolan & Donnelly 2011.)

### **5.3 Benefits of qualitative research technique**

The chosen method of studying and finding out more information from various sources about the topic is more convenient, since the work involves more of practical activities. It enables in the saving of time since less time is taken in analysing the results instead of taking too long to prepare graphs and tables, hence the research method used is a user research friendly. The research suggests the meanings and processes that are not examined through experimentation or measured in terms of quantity, it possesses a series of steps in analysing of findings and uses range of strategies of inquiry. The method of the research sometimes takes place in the natural setting where researchers can conduct the research in presence of the people they are studying or within the environment being examined. (Hogan et al 2011, 9.)

The study method highlighted has varied and multiple goals basing on the purpose of the study carried out. The outcomes compose essential representations and presentations of salient findings from the analytic synthesis of data. It is a beneficial method as it is conducted across multiple disciplines, education, sociology, anthropology, psychology, communication, journalism, healthcare, social-work, and other related fields. Through the survey of the study, an establishment of trustworthiness is enhanced, this is through the long-time engagement with

the respondents and triangulation in data collection, which is enhanced through internal validity. There is an advantage of transferability where the researcher can transfer the intention of research to a different setting, hence person conducting the survey has several options to choose from hence unlimited research information. (Saldana et al 2014, 4.)

#### **5.4 Data collection**

The process of data collection by the author involved conducting the interviews to the six companies that operate on a business to business perspective related field. The author of the thesis compiled up to a minimum of twenty questions that were used to carry out the interview process in the all companies where the research study was conducted. The interview questions involved structured, semi-structured and unstructured questions. Information and data collection from the interviews carried out varied from one to another. Modes of information collection involved the recording of the interview process and reviewing it later at the end of the interview then transferring them in the writing. Other modes involved notes taking answers from the interviewees of the relevant companies where the interview was carried out.

The author carried out the interviews in different platforms. This involved visiting the companies in question prior to the request send to carry out the research process. The other means involved conducting phone audio calling and video calling as well. The author carried out the study from the companies in Finland and some other companies where the information was obtained was from other countries. Process and time of information collection varied as well from one organisation basing on the time limit available and time limit given by the relevant personnel.

#### **5.5 Challenges faced during data collection**

The author encountered several challenges during the collection of the data. The range of challenges varied as well. The factors herein were that getting the place to carry out the interviews was quite not easy. The author had to send several requests to the companies in question to get the permission to carry out the research. Other factors were also the set time limit given and the availability of relevant personnel as the scheduled had to be on the time that the place of study was quite less busy, basically during breaks at work.



The requests that were sent some were not unanswered hence this posted another trick in the collection of the data from the companies. Some of the companies that had accepted the request ended up cancelling the request which has been cumbersome to the data collection hence leading to the time consumption in the collection of the information as going back to the drawing table has been a big challenge. Compilation of the data as well has been another trick in carrying out research process.

## **5.6 Studies carried out**

The main commissioner chosen for the study in this case was H & A Team Oy where major studies were conducted at. The other five companies were the companies that work as well with in the field of business-to-business aspect relationship. The interviews were conducted separately and at different time schedules on each of the company. The study carried out has been highlighted in six different interviews. This is from interview one to interview six in the case of this study.

The study carried out on the fore-mentioned organisations based on the interviews conducted and questions posted on them and the relevant personnel. The follow-ups were made to achieve the success of the research study and the intentions of the reason of carrying out the study. Highlighted in the proceeding sub-topics are the results that were compiled from the interviews conducted. The commissioner has been highlighted as the first organisation for the study carried out.

Table 1 below highlights a short summary of the entire interviews of the study conducted for this thesis research project. The names are highlighted as from interview 1 to interview 6, the interviewees position, the date when the interview was carried out and the time taken to cover up the study.

TABLE 1. Research study evaluation

<b>Name</b>	<b>Interviewees position</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Duration</b>
Interview 1	Human resource manager	01/12/2017	00.39.59 Face to face interview
Interview 2	Owner	7/12/2017	00.20.05 Phone call interview
Interview 3	Employed and shareholder	12/12/2017	00.11.14 Face to face interview
Interview 4	Owner	10/12/2017	00.19.00 Phone call interview
Interview 5	Shareholder	10/12/2017	00.13.18 Phone call interview
Interview 6	Owner	13/01/2018	00.07.45 Face to face interview

### 5.6.1 Interview 1

The interview was conducted on a qualitative data collection method. The interview was conducted as per the scheduled date planned. The initial start of the interview was conducted on the request through the email send to the human resource department personnel on the request to carry out the study research basing on the topic of the study, for the report. The feedback to carry on the survey study was received in within two days after a follow-up with the personnel in-charge.

The proceeding questions based on the efficiency of customer service delivery to their esteemed customers and how this has been achieved over the years the company has been in the service industry. In service delivery efficiency, the company co-creates the values of service provided to the customers. The company has a template on how they work. There is a value creation with the customers and to know what the customers really need and expect from the customers. They as well respect the feedback they receive from their customers and try to

advice on them professionally on how they can better deliver the services to better them in return. They carry on the duties as directed by the customers and by not being dictatorial on what is supposed to be done. Listening to the customers is what makes them grow day by day. It's up to the customer to make the decision. Their relationship with the customers is maintained eventually through arrangements of the regular meetings. Working on the feedback given by the customers matters a lot to them. The regular meeting organized between them and the customers helps them to build confidence and to bridge the gap in between them. In this way they can easily obtain direct feedback and build to develop on them. This way they get to know if the customers are really satisfied and how do they view the services provided with them.

Treatment of the information matters a lot. How the information is interpreted matters to both parties. Wrong information relayed means costs of money and time to fix the problem, hence this is a factor to consider delivering proper services to the customers. There is a need to be sharp on the information management. To reduce such incidences, the person concerned with the information, checks, and interprets everything first before being sent to the customers and the employees intended to get the information. Attention is very important aspect here to avoid any misinterpretation.

The key implications and benefits of the CRM maintenance enhances that the company can obtain trust over time on service delivery. Through a good relationship enhanced, customers tend to trust the company and in return, it changes the attitude of the customer positively towards the company. By gaining trust, it improves and expands the business through recommendations obtained from other customers. This comes through the relationship building developed over time through service delivery. Strategy, keep focusing on good quality service provision, that brings customers close. Maintaining the relationship more into the future for the business to grow more. Management involvement with the customers closely to maintain the relationship and being close to the customer is the key to future enhancement of the relationship management. Listening and reacting on what the customers say, not only audio, sound but as well the signals from the customers they give to the organization.

Employees' motivation is what enables the company to operate and deliver successfully to the customers. This is achieved through being very close to the employees and know how they are if they are okay or feeling motivated to work based on work provision. Being open to the employees and open communication enhances the employee motivation to work well at the customers' premises since they can know how their employees are faring on with the work progress. Staff satisfaction survey is carried out every regularly to know how satisfied the workers are. Listening to employees enhances their strength of service provision, the employees can request for relocation basing on their residential places and institutions of learning attended by the employees in question.

Trust is as well matters with the employees. Building the relationship with employees brings them close and free to share ideas which in return benefits the company to improve service delivery efficiency. Creation of a friendly working environment is another key point to note. Each one is free to carry on with their work freely without being stressed but to work with their own will without being pressurized. That is right place and right location and to know the expectations ahead. Rewarding of the employees through a Galla celebration every year to motivate each other and to build the strength with each other.

The company is a reliable partner and takes care of the neatness of the customers' premises with solid professionalism. The contract cleaning services cover virtually all types of real estate, such as office premises, museums, swimming pools, sports facilities, shops, restaurants, and stairwells. In addition to maintenance cleaning, the company also offers special vacuum cleaners, such as window cleaning, carpet cleaning, furniture cleaning, basic floor cleaning and waxing, and escalator cleaning. Major focused regions where the organisation has many of its contracts are in the metropolitan area and its neighbouring municipalities.

### **5.6.2 Interview 2**

The second phase of the study survey was conducted in a sole proprietorship retail shop where the business is operated in a business to business perspective. The prerequisite of the interview was conducted on the initial phase of the study through the various requests send to the proprietor of the organisation. The business is basically operating within the busiest centre and

the person has been in the industry for quite a long time, some years ago to the present time. The business was established six years ago to the present moment. The improvement and development of the business has been gradual, and the results have been enormous to the organisation.

The personnel in question has been in the sole proprietorship business industry for a period of six years at the recent time since the beginning of venturing into the business. The person is majorly a retailer and acquires the products of sell from the wholesalers where the final delivery of the commodities is made, that is the consumers of the product. The personnel deals and specialises in wide range of the products, that are necessary for the consumers at hand. The basis of the business as per the case is to ensure that the market niche is bridged to maintain the market chain of goods, that is from the manufactures to the final consumer of the products manufactured. The efficiency of the customer satisfaction is enhanced by the business in question through the enhancement of the customer satisfaction. That is by responding promptly to the customers and ensuring that there is availability of the products. A good communication laid in between the retailer and the wholesaler as per the case study is what has been keeping the business growing strong over time between the two parties, hence growth of the business enormously with time. To keep both parties going strong and to ensure that the needs of the final consumer are met, there are established aftersales services in both perspectives of the business to keep the market chain command.

The general implications the personnel have obtained from service and relationship management delivery, are that, the customer loyalty is gained, and trust is built between the two partners. As per the case the business builds a good reputation from the customers and this leads to high rate of turnover, and sales. The volume of goods acquired takes a short time to sell them, due to the market trust established. In return, more profits are generated through satisfied service delivery to the clients and customers.

The shortcomings realised through the business operations with time, show that the business industry has quite a lot of challenges to encounter, nationally and as well internationally. As per the case the business is a dynamic venture and it keeps on changing every day, talking of economic and political perspectives which affect the business both at national level and international level. Security is as well the key to business growth, where peace of a region determines the goodwill of the business. The current situation of the stability of the region

affects the business in different perspectives. Technology advancement and development has been another factor to consider. Embracing of technology is what has been a focus as quite many intended customers have not taken technology much into consideration on the business field. Acquiring of skilled personnel to deliver duties is what has been another challenge, whereby the business person must provide some small training, and this must be paid to the person before the initial start of the work. Getting the exact person who has skills in the field has been a challenge to such kind of the businesses in business sector.

The personnel in-charge of the organisation focuses on the continuous development and growth of the relationship between the organisation and the concerned clients to the business in question. The focus is as well on the service delivery and improvement of the services to the customers to achieve and ensure that customers get exactly what they expect from them. The business looks on its growth and expansion in the business industry and sector at large.

### **5.6.3 Interview 3**

The author conducted the third interview study with the agent of the organisation who has subscribed to deliver the services to the desired customers. This way the agent person acquires the products from the main company and delivers them to people. The inception of the interview was organised first with the planning of a renaissance study before the main interview was scheduled to take place.

The general services provided by the organisation, are that the agents have quite several tasks to carry out to the clients. The factors obtained here are the key responsibilities for every service agent to deliver to the clients and any other services that the customer might require provided they are within the company provisions. There are some requirements for one to become an agent of the company, several factors are taken into consideration. If one wants to become an Agent, they are free to apply. There are some basic requirements that one must meet for the application to be successful. Such factors are majorly for the essence of the customer service delivery to the clients and relationship management. It focuses on the trust and the security of the customer when the transactions are carried out by both parties, to assure the intended transactions are mend to the right person.

Basically, the authorised agent in this case performs several duties as a bridge between the authorising company and the esteemed customers of the services of the subscriber company. The services delivered by the company have become an inevitable part of our lives today from sending and receiving money, doing bank transactions, paying rents through the payment codes, school fees payments through the school fees payment codes and shopping. Strange thing though for those that have never been involved in the business have no clue on how it operates in the back end. The organisations ecosystem operates in a hierarchy structure from a higher level(bank) to lower tier level of agents and sub agents. Most clients interact with the system at the sub-agent level i.e. where you do your cash deposits or withdrawals. The numerous agent's shops located across the country are mostly sub-agents meaning they operate under principal agents, that is, another agent but at a higher level.

For one to run the services business one must be allocated a till with a unique agent number. The agent's till operates or runs on a different type of subscriber identity module card which is customized for the above functions of an agent though can also be used for other company services e.g. calls and short message services.

Two types of transactions are done on daily basis for being an agent as stipulated out by the organisation under their services provision. Deposits and the withdrawals, basically done through depositing of the mobile bank into the clients account, either directly to the phone registered account and as well directly to the bank account registered by the client in connection to the services provided by the servicing company, this goes in the exchange of the cash transaction given and delivered on hand by the customer. Cash withdrawals are made when a customer visits any company agents' outlet and withdraws the money from mobile wallet through the agent in the exchange of cash as well, which is credited automatically by the confirmation when the customer logs in with the details of the agent number outlet at any service point. The transactions are debited and credited directly to both the accounts of the agent and the customer requiring the service transactions at any agent outlet. The transactions and services provided makes it easy to access the cash at any near service point agent, hence customer service enhanced, and convenience and trust created between the both parties. Customer service is the priority and the reason it keeps the company expanding and growing immensely with time.

Through the studies carried out, the relationship management is highly maintained by ensuring that the agents get full service and request from the principal agent to the sub-agents who are on the lower rank of the business hierarchy. This is ensured through answering and responding within the short time on the posted asked questions from and to the agents' outlet. This way the customer service is as well maintained to sustain and keep the company operating and running on every daily transaction and reaching all the customers at any possible locations in the country and even other countries that accept the terms of service for the customers who might want to use the services through mobile money transactions.

Certain shortcomings are encountered in the operation because of rendering out the services to the customers, competition in the industry from the similar agents around poses being a factor. Making of the calls transfer to the customer service is a factor to consider. Time taken to deal with a customer matters as well, as there are clients that might take quite long on some small cases and complaints which end up leading to time consumption.

#### **5.6.4 Interview 4**

The fourth interview study was on a company specialising in hardware materials for the construction, that is different types of building materials. The interview was taken through a phone call recording with the client of the study case. The study topic was highlighted, and questions forwarded to the interviewee beforehand to make the research client to be aware of the research plan and the key point of the study and particularly how and what the interview was going to cover.

Basing on the information obtained from the interview carried out, the organisation has been able and try to understand the market before the commitment of money and resources to the business. The key points obtained from the study to delivering efficient customer service to the clients is the identification of the market potential places for the products. There is as well the need to fully synchronize the trends and the ruling prices in the business industry. From the studies conducted, one needs to have several factors to consider prior to the business operation, that is a market potential place, the competitors who are already in the market, the financial



requirement, the trends on how the business has been developing up overtime and the recent time.

Author's client operates on general building materials, service delivery is basically delivered by considering on the transportation cost and efficiency of the customers in the two-way form, business to customers and business to business. There is an after-sales operation provision of the services to the customers for example when they purchase goods and commodities in bulk. It is one of the main factors to consider offered to make the delivery easy and faster without difficulty to the customer. Patience has been the key that keeps the organisation growing, having a habit of facing every business day with courage and managing to get up to work early in the morning every day of the week on a business operation basis and stay in the place of work the whole day to ensure every customer that comes acquires what they need.

Communication modes are other factors that go hand in hand with the business, being frank and open to the customers on the products and the prices offered at the time, creates honesty and trust amongst the service provider and the business in question. Serving each person that comes to the premises without any bias. Availability of the personnel during the business operation is the strength as well. Talking to customers frankly enables the clients to have enough time to the service provider. Paying attention makes the customers feel cared for.

Customer relationship is enhanced through the respect creation between the parties involved which in turn improves the customer relationships. Putting efforts that makes the customers remember the services obtained. Enhancement of the business connections between the other businesses and the direct product users as well. Providing the clients with offers at certain periods of the month in a year. A client acquiring the products can access the offered product at varied prices with a set time limit.

Good services provided in return results in increase with the number of the customer and in turn results in the good reputation of the business to other clients hence makes the organisation to grow and in a competitive level in the business industry. Encouragement of the convenient shopping enhances the development as well. Trusted clients can easily place the required orders through phone calling to the office and free delivery and payments being made later during the day promotes the trust. Provision of all services to the clients, that is, all the products dealt with are within the premises, hence the clients can shop easily on all the products required without

necessarily having to look in another shop for the products which in return makes their work easy and satisfied with the services. Through the consideration of the above factors leads to the prominence growth and expansion of the business because of trustworthiness and reputation build in the business industry by the organisation to the customers.

### **5.6.5 Interview 5**

The process of the study began with a conductance of the renaissance prior to the interview study. The basis of the study was first highlighted to the author's client on what the study was all about and the reason for the survey study on the given topic. Basic information about the organisation was taken as part of the research study. The business was started up by the group of students with the idea of the project then being run by as one-person business. The business involves sewing and making of the pillows and the cases and selling them to the markets to people who in return sell them to the customers. Operation of the business is still new and quite young in the business industry, there are improvements making the organisation to keep on growing.

Information obtained from the interviewee was that there is always a need to create a comprehensive start-up plan, and networking with successful retailers who have been in the industry and to learn from what they have done to achieve their goals and as well from the mistakes committed in the operation. A determination on where a place to locate the business matters a lot, basing on how one is going to compete successfully with the existing firms. A key to a successful growing business is to keenly check on focusing on not underestimating the power of competition as it is one of the factors to consider for the business to run overall and to survive in the business industry sector and economic constraints.

The business perspective future is to enhance on the gradual growth and maintaining stronger customer relationships ties to achieve the high-end customers of the products. Time planning is the key to consider as well to cope with the demands and making of the products to keep the chain in the business operation and in the industry at large to ensure that operations are run on smoothly and continuously without barriers in between the working days and hours. Getting the entrepreneurial advice from people who have been operating businesses equivalent to the business intended to operate, or already operating matters as it could be one of the good remote

business advice to learn from, compare on the operation of the organisation in question. The best way to develop a small growing business is to focus on gradually building a brand awareness for a period to get the business to sell and being competitive in the industry.

#### **5.6.6 Interview 6**

The final interview in this study was conducted in a farming related business field in which case the interviewee lives and works in Finland as well. The business is basically operated in an abroad country outside Finland, where its focus is on farm produce majoring in grains produce from the farm and channelling them to the factories and grains mills where the raw products are finally converted to the ready customer user products for consumption. The process operation is quite long and basically runs up all along the year and it is a seasonal one.

The business is generally operated in both perspectives of the market demand, that is business to business and business to customers. The products from the farm can be either sold directly to the consumers for consumption and other way to the mills. In the mills and cereals, the products are converted to different end products for human consumption and for animals for example cows and pets. The business usually picks up during the high season period and operates on until the beginning of another sowing season. Due to the many produce at the harvesting season, the prices normally start at the low level and pick up when the sellers have reduced.

The author found out from the study conducted that there are certain benefits that the business operator obtains from running the business. Some of the factors found out were that there are good profits generated from the business as the products purchased from framers could be at a fair cheaper price and the selling prices being high, as the sellers wait for the high selling prices season. The farmers normally get some discounts and subsidies on materials used for the production which makes the work operation to be easier and user friendly, hence running the kind of business becomes fun and being motivated to run the business with the willingness to serve the customers.

## **5.7 Evaluation of the research**

The validity and reliability of the theoretical work has been seen to work successfully in the research part of this study. The knowledge gathered from theory work enabled the author to learn more and to look for the necessary study materials applicable for this study. It enhanced on the writer to carry out the topic discussed in this chapter fully and professionally and how the interviewees of the different companies were approached. Key definitions of terms and their explanations are the reason as to why theoretical part are very important in every research work as they give the author or the researcher to know what exactly is being studied upon before the practical field work commences. Definition of the key terms was essential for the entire study. Key factors to customer service and the relationship management. (Armstrong & Kotler 1999, 8.)

The studies carried out in the previous subchapters in this chapter have been simplified and compiled together in table 1 below. It was found out in the study that the companies studied upon operating within business to business share a common interest in meeting and satisfying their customer needs and wants. In all interviews conducted, every company's key point was at the end touching on how to drive the customers to their companies and how to make them satisfied. The research and the interview questions used are a justification of the topic in question for this entire study. (Becker & Huselid 1998, 85.)

## **5.8 Analysis and results**

Basing on the interview questions and method of data collection from the studies conducted, the author of this thesis finds out that the customer service within the organisations is well developed. In all the organisations taken for the study, the key point is in the concentration on their customers. The study reveals that organisations are on the frontline to check on their relationship with their customers and the clients. The interview questions formulated on the study were well covered which enabled the author to clearly carry out the research with the interviewees.

The sample questions prepared for the study touched the entire basic features on the customer service and the relationship management to their clients. The questions had been asked hierarchically as to cover all the necessary needed information for the study. The qualitative

research method used for this study enabled the author to get the answers on the interview directly as the interview had been done directly one on one with the interviewee.

The study found out that customer satisfaction leads to the growth of the business and how the customers view the organisation. Hence, the information gathered from the research in chapter 5 is a justification that good customer service and a relationship management is the key point to consider in given business and even for those who want to start their business, should focus on the customers before investing on anything much as the customers are the key drivers in every business.

The companies where the interviews were carried out clearly show that a good relationship established between them and the customers has a great impact on their development and the growth as they are the factors that strengthen them at large. This has been in the research chapter in chapter 5 where the interviewed companies keep on track to see that the relationship amongst them is maintained on their daily operations of their businesses and the service deliveries offered to the customers.

In the studies conducted, the six companies interviewed in the study, all of them share a common interest of focusing on the customer satisfaction and their relationship with their clients. This is seen as every player in the industry is trying to offer good services to their clients and making follow ups to know if the customers are fully satisfied.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The entire process of writing this thesis has been education to the author as carrying out the study in the six different companies has been a wide range of work to execute. The objective of this writing was to find out on how customer service and relationship management could be of a great benefit to the organisation, the aim was to know if the customer service and relationship is implemented within the business companies for their customer satisfaction. The research studies executed were satisfactory that the topic of study is well understood by the relevant organisations on where the interviews had been performed. In all the six companies studied they all focused and touched on this topic as the customers are what gives them the reason to run and operate the business on daily basis.

The theoretical framework used has been essential to the author to carry out the study successfully. This is because it enabled the writer to clearly understand the relevant topics and points needed to know for the entire study and for the topic of study in question. Chapters 2 and 3, where the theoretical work has been majorly based on, helped the writer of this thesis to understand the customer service and relationship management to formulate the questions for this study as well that were researched on from the different companies.

Recommendations based from the study were that, the companies should keep on improving on the topic of study and to focus more to make the customers satisfied from their services. Service delivery should be exclusively and differently from the competitors to enable them to have different ways of reaching out to the customers. The case company studied should touch more on executing differently their services to the clients to enable them to survive the current competitive market industry in place. This could be done in accordance in observation of the current trends in the market and the advancement of the industry. The start of this is on the employee motivation and empowering them to deliver their duties unconditionally.

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## **APPENDIX**

- 1 What is customer relationship management entailed in the organisation.
- 2 What is customer service as per the organisation.
- 3 How does the business find it useful in implementation of the CRM in their operations
- 4 What does the CRM entail in customer development and satisfaction by the organisation perspective
- 5 What does customer service entail in customer development in the organisation
- 6 How has CRM affected the business growth and success
- 7 What are the implications of customer satisfaction on business growth
- 8 What could be the challenges facing the business in relation to CRM within the organisation
- 9 What are the challenges business faces in relation to customer service provision.
- 10 What are the implications of the mentioned challenges based on CRM and customer service above have to the business development.
- 11 What are the co-relation of the CRM and business development in the current world.
- 12 The co-relation of customer satisfaction and success of a business in current society.
- 13 How is CRM applied to get great benefits to the business in question.
- 14 How does a good CRM translate to best results in the business.
- 15 How does a good customer service imply to the success of the business and its growth.
- 16 How does future CRM look like basing on the organisation business perspective.
- 17 How does future customer service look like basing on the organisation in question.
- 18 How does an organisation maintain the CRM and customer service to its sustainability in the business economy.
- 19 What could be the best recommendations to use CRM in a business.
- 20 What is the major recommendation of maintaining a stable dual customer service for business evolution in the business sector/industry